

## Message Text

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ACTION VOE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 EB-07 COME-00 /019 W

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R 271415Z APR 76

FM AMCONSUL MONTERREY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2493

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS MONTERREY 0393

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, MX

SUBJ: 171 PERCENT INCREASE IN PRICE MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORTS

1. EFFECTIVE APRIL 26 PRICE MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORT OBTAINED IN MONTERREY INCREASED FROM 28 DLLRS (350 PESOS) TO 76 DLLRS (950 PESOS). MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORTS ARE ISSUED WITH TWO YEAR VALIDITY AND MAY BE REVALIDATED TWICE, FOR TOTAL VALIDITY OF SIX YEARS. EFFECTIVE SAME DATE, COST OF REVALIDATION INCREASED FROM 10.40 DLLRS (130 PESOS) TO 50.40 DLLRS (630 PESOS). MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORT OBTAINED IN MEXICO CITY OR AT MEXICAN CONSULAR OFFICE ABROAD NOW COSTS 64 DLLRS (800 PESOS), EACH REVALIDATION COSTS 48 DLLRS (600 PESOS). COST OVER SIX YEAR PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORT AND TWO VALIDATIONS WILL BE 176.80 DLLRS (2210 PESOS) IN MONTERREY , 160 DLLRS (2000 PESOS) IN MEXICO CITY AND ABROAD. THESE INCREASES BASED ON DECREE PUBLISHED IN DIARIO OFICIAL, EQUIVALENT OF FEDERAL REGISTER, ON APRIL 23.

2. INFO REGARDING PRICE INCREASES WAS OBTAINED FROM HEAD LOCAL FEDERAL PASSPORT OFFICE. HE STATED THAT PRICE RISE NOT EFFORT ON GOVERNMENT'S PART TO HINDER MEXICAN TOURIST TRAVEL TO U.S. AND THEREFORE KEEP PESO IN MEXICO, BUT MERELY NEW MEXICAN GOVERNMENT PROGRAM IN WHICH CITIZENS PAY FOR SERVICES RECEIVED. STATED THAT MEXICO ONE OF FEW COUNTRIES IN WORLD IN WHICH CITIZENS FREE TO TRAVEL OUTSIDE COUNTRY WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS. EQUATED NEW PRICE PASSPORTS WITH LUXURY TAX MEXICO PLACES ON LARGE EXPENSIVE AUTOMOBILES AND FELT THAT THOSE MEXICANS WISHING LUXURY OF TRAVEL OUTSIDE

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MEXICO WOULD HAVE TO PAY PRICE FOR THEIR LIFESTYLE. MONTERREY

PASSPORT OFFICE EXPECTS SMALL TEMPORARY DROP IN NUMBER PASSPORT APPLICANTS, THEN RETURN TO NORMAL LEVELS.

3. WHILE THIS STEEP PRICE INCREASE WILL HAVE SOME NEGATIVE IMPACT ON TOURISM OUR CONSULAR DISTRICT TO U.S. AND ISSUANCE NONIMMIGRANT VISAS, WE DOUBT IMPACT WILL BE GREAT. MOST MEXICAN STATES, INCLUDING EVERY STATE OUR DISTRICT, EXCEPT FOR NUEVO LEON WHICH IS SERVED BY FEDERAL PASSPORT OFFICE, ISSUE THEIR OWN PASSPORTS. AT PRESENT TIME, MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORTS ISSUED ONLY IN MONTERREY AND MEXICO CITY, AND AT MEXICAN CONSULAR OFFICES ABROAD. FEDERAL PASSPORT OFFICE EXPECTED TO OPEN IN GUADALAJARA WITHIN ONE MONTH. IT REMAINS BE SEEN WHETHER STATE PASSPORT OFFICES WILL FOLLOW FEDERAL EXAMPLE AND INCREASE PRICESTHEIR PASSPORTS. HEAD STATE PASSPORT OFFICE IN STATE OF COAHUILA EXPECTS GOVERNOR TO DECREE RISE IN PRICE ONE YEAR STATE PASSPORT FROM 9.60 DLLRS (120 PESOS) TO 16 DLLRS (200 PESOS). EMEN AT INCREASED PRICE, STATE PASSPORT WOUL D BE BIDDAIN COMPARED TO FEDERAL PASSPORT, COSTING MUCH LESS THAN FEDERAL DOCUMENT. COAHUILA STATE PASSPORT OFFICE EXPECTSRISE NUMBER APPLICANTS OPTING FOR STATE PASSPORT INSTEAD OF FEDERAL. WHILE MEXICAN LAW DEMANDS THAT MEXICAN CITIZENS DEPARTING MEYICO HAVE VALID MEXICAN PASSPORT, MANY BEARERS OF BORDER CROSSNING CARDS WHO TRAVEL BY CAR OR BUS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DATE NEGOTIATE THEIR WAY PAST MEXICAN IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS WITHOUT MEXICAN PASSPORT.

4. NEVERTHELESS, INCREASED COST MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORT WILL SERVE DECREASE CASUAL TOURISM FROM STATE NUEVO LEON TO U.S. FOR THOSE PERSONS WITHOUT BORDER CROSSING CARDS OR VALID TOURIST VISAS. IT MAY ALSO SERVE PLACE PRESSRURE ON CONGEN ISSUE MORE BORDER CROSSING CARDS AND 212 (D)(4)(A) PASSPORT AND VISA WAIVERS. OTHER EFFECT MIGHT BE SLIGHT INCREASE OF PERSONS ENTERING TEXAS WITHOUT INSPECTION, SINCE SOME WORKING CLASS MEXICANS WILL FIND COST FEDERAL PASSPORT BEYOND THEIR MEANS. WE VERY MUCH DOUBT THIS NEW PRICE WIL L HAVE ANY EFFAFFECT ON IMMIGRANT VISA APPLICANTS, SINCE THEY WILLING SPEND ALL NECESSARY MONEY FOR IMMIGRATION.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 27 APR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976MONTER00393  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760161-0048  
**From:** MONTERREY  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760416/aaaaamvj.tel  
**Line Count:** 98  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION VOE  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ellisoob  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 25 JAN 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** WITHDRAWN <01 Apr 2004 by morefirh, INA>; RELEASED <25 JAN 2005 by hackerp0>; APPROVED <26 JAN 2005 by ellisoob>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** 171 PERCENT INCREASE IN PRICE MEXICAN FEDERAL PASSPORTS  
**TAGS:** CVIS, MX  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006